

**Taking Control of our Parking Problem**  
**Council President Scott Peters, First District**  
**For the La Jolla Light, April 2007**

For nearly two years, the La Jolla Community Parking District Board has grappled with a decades-old problem – the lack of available parking in the commercial and beach areas of La Jolla. The ten citizens who sit on the board represent large and small business owners and everyday citizens who want local control over the availability of street parking and enforcement of parking rules in high-demand areas such as the Village, Bird Rock, the Shores and the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to UCSD.

The City Council created the Community Parking District in 2005, after numerous false-starts and abandoned proposals to address parking issues in commercial and residential zones. The earliest efforts to address the parking deficit here date back to 1979, when the La Jolla Parking and Business Improvement Association proposed a parking structure and paid parking in the Village. In numerous discussions since then, we've learned a lot, but many of the challenges have remained the same.

The proposed parking framework recently prepared by the Community Parking District for consideration by the La Jolla community includes a variety of tools aimed at ensuring that 10-15% availability of on-street parking in high-demand areas to accommodate visitors and discourage the gaming of time limits by wiping chalk off your tires. The plan recommends “pay and display” kiosks which cover a dozen or more spaces and accept payment by cash, credit or debit. Parking permits would be available to residents and visitors at a reasonable rate.

The plan also encourages the use of public transit through discounted passes and the potential of a shuttle system in the future, which would carry employees and visitors into La Jolla from the Old Town Trolley stop and other locations. Currently, forty-five percent of the revenue generated in La Jolla would stay here to support enforcement, public transit and beautification. I encourage the Parking District to present a more detailed plan to the City, laying out how those revenues would be used for specific projects, to strengthen the case for keeping an even larger percentage of revenue in La Jolla.

I attended the recent community meeting sponsored by the Parking District which featured a very interesting lecture from UCLA professor Donald Shoup. His research examines cities that have successfully implemented parking programs, such as Redwood City. That community uses variable parking prices to maintain the desired 10-15% availability rate. When more parking is available, the price is lower than at peak-demand times.

At that meeting we also heard from Ray Weiss, a member of the parking district board and what you might call a “convert.” When chosen for the board, he was 100%, absolutely, adamantly opposed to the idea of paid parking in La Jolla. After studying Dr.

Shoup's research and hearing about successful parking strategies in other communities, Dr. Weiss has become a strong proponent of the current framework.

There's another issue La Jolla had not considered in 1979 -- greenhouse gas emissions and their effect on the environment. In one 15-block radius in Los Angeles, the search for free on-street parking created nearly one million extra miles of driving in a year, wasting 47,000 gallons of gas and pumping 730 tons of carbon dioxide into the environment. That's an inconvenient truth!

The plan is still in its preliminary stages. Plenty of opportunities remain for public input and adjustments to the framework before it is finalized and presented to the City for consideration. I encourage you to attend the La Jolla Community Parking District meetings, held the third Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. at the Athenaeum at 1080 Wall Street. You can view the parking management report and learn more about La Jolla's historical attempts to address this issue on the web, [www.lajollabythesea.com/parking](http://www.lajollabythesea.com/parking).